



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Kind Demands Independent Commission to Investigate Hurricane Response Failures

Republican Majority Denies Vote on Measure to Create Public-backed Independent Panel

Washington, DC – Voicing his support for an independent commission modeled after the 9/11 Commission to investigate the federal government's inept response to Hurricane Katrina, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind (D-WI) opposed a Republican proposal to create a majority-dominated congressional investigative committee; the Republican measure (H. Res. 437) ultimately passed the U.S. House yesterday 224-188. Despite broad public support for an independent investigation, the Republican leadership denied a vote on a proposal to establish a 9/11 Commission - style panel.

"We can't afford to compromise the credibility of this investigation by getting bogged down in partisan politics, which is why I support the creation of an independent commission modeled after the 9/11 Commission to conduct this inquiry," stated Rep. Kind. "The American people demand accountability, and they expect us to focus on the facts. If a serious bipartisan investigation is really the goal, then an independent commission is what we need."

Despite claims that a Congressional select committee would operate in the spirit of bipartisanship, it would not have an equal number of Republicans and Democrats and would not have bipartisan subpoena power. The 9/11 Commission provides a different model – it had an equal number of Republicans and Democrats and worked in a completely non-partisan fashion.

The Republican leadership insisted on establishing the partisan select committee despite the fact that the vast majority of the American public is calling for the creation of an independent commission. A recent Washington Post-ABC News poll found that 76 percent of the public supports the creation of an independent commission, modeled on the 9/11 Commission, to investigate the federal response to Hurricane Katrina. The proposal drew strong bipartisan support: 64 percent of Republicans and 83 percent of Democrats were in favor.